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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes – January 18, 2011

In attendance: Barry Levis (Chair), Rick Bommelje (Secretary), Gloria Cook, Chris Fuse, Sebastian Novak, Dawn Roe, Kristen Trucco, Martina Vidovic, Deb Wellman

Guests in attendance: Li Wie, Greg Cavanaugh

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 PM.

Minutes. The minutes of the January 11, 2011 meeting were approved.

Old Business

1. Chinese Minor

Barry referred to the revised major minor map that has been submitted by Nancy Decker. He cited the November 30, 2010 AAC minutes in which concerns were raised and the item was passed back to Nancy for revisions. Li Wei identified the changes in the revised map which states that one (1) of the language across the curriculum courses (content/topic courses that has additional language component with authentic reading materials) may count toward the minor. Barry raised a concern about Li Wei's credentials and the concern about SACS requirements. His Ph.D. is not in Chinese language. This issue needs to be explored to insure that we will be in compliance. Barry queried about the anticipated number of students in the minor. Li Wei indicated that there are two current students that would benefit with the minor. Deb stated that there are three majors that will feed into this minor. She indicated that there would be approximately 20 minors. Gloria pointed out that the Chinese language is a difficult language to learn to speak fluently. Li Wei concurred and pointed out that it takes at least two to three times as long to learn the language compared to a number of other languages. Barry queried if the College has provisions for a self-designed minor. Deb stated that there currently is none. Barry raised the point that if there is not a demand for this minor, perhaps it could be solved through the creation of the self-designed minor. Barry pointed out that when the item is brought to the faculty, there could be a concern that additional staffing is required. Additionally, he expressed the concern that has been discussed in this committee about the proliferation of programs. He asked that the Dean call a serious campus wide discussion on planned abandonment. Deb stated that this was one of the items on the Chair's agenda. Referring back to the Chinese minor, Deb indicated that with three majors feeding to it there should be student demand. Li Wei asked what the acceptable number of minors would be. Sebastian voiced that he did not believe that there would many students who have interest in it when they realize the degree of difficulty. Barry referenced that the 8 students in the Asian Studies minor is problematic in his opinion. Chris indicated that since China is going to be so important globally, it would be unfortunate not to approve the minor now and then have to do it after the fact. Barry

asked Li Wei how the program will be staffed. Li Wei stated that not all levels are offered at the same time. Gloria queried about where the writing and reading proficiencies will be taught in the curriculum. Li Wei indicated that the speaking, reading, and writing proficiencies are very time consuming. This would be addressed by 5 times weekly in the first year and 4 times weekly in the second year. Barry asked if it is possible to provisionally approve the minor to determine student demand. He emphasized that once it is approved, we have to service the students who are in the pipeline.

Chris made that motion that we approve the minor conditionally for two years and that AAC revisit it to determine student demand. Martina seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

New Business

1. Change in Organizational Communication Major and Communication Minor

Rick introduced the proposal to revise both the Organizational Communication major and Communication minor by introducing the course COM 425 Communication Theory and Research as a core course. Greg presented the proposal to the committee with the rationale. COM 425 would replace COM 300 Communication Theory and COM 395 Communication Research in the major and replace COM 300 in the minor. Greg indicated that in the A&S minor there is currently no research component. COM 425 would incorporate this and would also be structured to be the final course in the minor. Rick stated that there are 10 out of the 19 peer and aspirant schools that offer a Communication major. Most of the institutions do not offer either a Communication Theory or Research course. Davidson offers a similar Communication Theory and Research course. Barry queried if justice can be done by combining the courses. Greg presented an overview of how the academic rigor would be exceeded by what is currently offered. Gloria asked if the final product would be original research. Greg concurred. Barry stated that the course would need to be approved by the New Course Approval sub-committee. Additionally, Rick stated that the Communication minor map will include COM 305, Listening, as an elective. Kristen queried if there would ever be a major in Communication. Barry shared some of the history of the last attempt in proposing a Communication major over ten years ago. Deb expressed curiosity that Rollins does not have a Communication major since it is one of the original seven Liberal Arts. Deb asked if there could be a parallel with the Music and English departments of offering more courses across the curriculum. Greg pointed out that there more cross listed courses will be offered in the future. Rick stated that to have a parallel with English and Music, we would need to have a common major in both Holt and A&S such as Organizational Communication. Barry shared the history about how Organizational Communication and Organizational Behavior were instituted in the Holt School to appeal to the business sector. He also emphasized that the department is ready to move the discussion of a major forward but only if there is strong institutional support. Barry asked if there is a motion on the floor to accept the proposal.

Gloria made a motion to accept the proposal. Chris seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

2. Attendance Policy (from Student Life Committee)

Barry stated the Student Life Committee examined the current attendance policy in light of Religious holidays and other Rollins related business absences. The Executive Committee decided that AAC should explore this item from an academic perspective to make suggestions or changes. Barry summarized the policy by stating that you cannot penalize a student specifically for these but if they actually exceed the number of absences it can adversely impact the grade. The class participation grade can be affected. Barry stated that his attendance policy is that three absences are permitted. Anything over this amount would adversely impact the class participation grade which is in line with the policy. This policy would especially impact students taking language, English composition and laboratory courses. Dawn stated that the best students would not take advantage of the policy. Gloria stated that there is a reason why we want students to be in class. Martina indicated that some student athletes who are gone on meets do not complete the homework due for that particular day. Chris emphasized that student athletes should arrange to submit their homework early when they will be at an event. Rick queried what the Executive Committee wants AAC to do in addition to discussing the item. Barry stated that we should determine whether or not changes should be made since this comes from the Student Life perspective and not the academic point of view. This will affect courses that have a drop dead number of absences policy. Martina stated that she has had negative experiences with student athletes taking examinations and cheating while they are on a trip. Gloria stated that this is not a unique problem to Rollins and that some schools have tutors to assist with the administration of examinations. Barry's sense is that this policy is so elaborate and difficult that it needs to be streamlined. Rick suggested that we send the policy to the Student Life Committee for revisions. Chris stated that it needs to be made very explicit. Dawn stated that there is no reason that Religious observances and college business absences can't be combined. Barry summarized the discussion by stating the committee's concerns and he will send it back to Bill Boles and the Student Life Committee for revisions.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46 PM.

Rick Bommelje
Secretary